

BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on threatened birds are also welcome. Their status ** follows BirdLife International (2001) *Threatened Birds of Asia*. English names, sequence and scientific nomenclature follows Manakadan & Pittie (2001): Standardised common and scientific names of the birds of the Indian Subcontinent. *Buceros* 6(1): i-ix, 1-38. Unless specified, all observations are for 2001. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, etc., are at the end. For selection of breeding criteria 'Probable, Possible, Confirmed', see Pitta # 82, February 1998, p. 4.

ANDHRA PRADESH

GUNTUR DISTRICT

Uppalapadu 4.xii (KMR)

SPOT-BILLED PELICAN VU* 220 CB, 79 N; LITTLE CORMORANT 250; PAINTED STORK NT* 26, CB 1 N; ASIAN OPENBILL-STORK 1400 CB; ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 600, CB; EURASIAN SPOONBILL 1.

MEDAK DISTRICT

16.xii (RM, JVDM)

(8km before Medak town on the Medak-Narsapur road)

GREY-NECKED BUNTING 30+; BLACK-HEADED BUNTING 15; RED-HEADED BUNTING 200+.

Pocharam Tank

ASIAN OPENBILL-STORK 239; EUROPEAN WHITE STORK 7; GLOSSY IBIS 57; ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 5; BLACK IBIS 5; EURASIAN SPOONBILL 4; GREATER FLAMINGO 3; BAR-HEADED GOOSE 538; UNIDENTIFIED DUCK 10,000+ arr., after sundown; RIVER TERN 116; BLACK-BELLIED TERN NT* 23.

Rayanpally Tank

GLOSSY IBIS 8; ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 12; BLACK IBIS 6.

RANGAREDDI DISTRICT

28-30.xii (RM, SAK)

Ibrahimpur Tank

LITTLE CORMORANT 830; LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK 1,824; COMB DUCK 21; GADWALL 37; NORTHERN SHOVELLER 236; NORTHERN PINTAIL 1,576; RED-CRESTED POCHARD 15; COMMON POCHARD 358; TUFTED POCHARD 1,239; UNIDENTIFIED DUCK c. 15,000+.

Kotpally Tank

BAR-HEADED GOOSE 231; GADWALL 18; NORTHERN PINTAIL 1,256; GARGANEY 136; COMMON TEAL 239; COMMON POCHARD 658; FERRUGINOUS POCHARD NT* 2; TUFTED POCHARD 895.

Laknapur Tank

LITTLE CORMORANT 685; GLOSSY IBIS 58; COMB DUCK 22; COTTON TEAL 485; EURASIAN WIGEON 202; NORTHERN SHOVELLER 962; NORTHERN PINTAIL 2,385; RED-CRESTED POCHARD 168; COMMON POCHARD 1,432; TUFTED POCHARD 1,852; UNIDENTIFIED DUCK c. 25,000+; UNIDENTIFIED WADERS in clouds.

Mittekoduru Tank

EGRETS (mixed species flocks) 25,000+ roosting in Ipomea; POND HERON 500+ roosting in Ipomea; GLOSSY IBIS 58; LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK 878; COMB DUCK 4; GADWALL 4; NORTHERN SHOVELLER 62; NORTHERN PINTAIL 476; RED-CRESTED POCHARD 6; COMMON POCHARD 32; TUFTED POCHARD 52; PINTAIL SNIPE & COMMON SNIPE c. 358 (were coming into 5 acres of a freshly ploughed field late in the evening); ROSY STARLING 25,000+ roosting in the Ipomea in the lake; COMMON MYNA 10,000+ roosting in the Ipomea.

DELHI

Delhi Canal (Bawana-Daryapur stretch)

7.xii (SCS): BLACKNECKED STORK NT* 1 pair in a ploughed field; BLACK IBIS 27 on an Eucalyptus tree; GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE

VU* 1+1 ad; SARUS CRANE VU* 2+3 (including 1 juvenile) +1+2+2+3+2 in surrounding fields.

Jor Bagh

16.xii (AA): INDIAN WHITEBACKED VULTURE CR* PRB, 1 ad., fetching stick to a N under const., 4m up a Silver Oak tree.

Okhla and surrounding areas

2.xii (ND; others): GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE VU* 3 ad.

17.xii (KBB; SV): YELLOWLEGGED GULL 1.

GOA

NORTH GOA DISTRICT (HL)

Anjuna Seabird Watch

23.ix: JOUANIN'S PETREL 407+ migrating N, 2-9km offshore; GARGANEY 11 migrating S, 2km offshore; ROSEATE TERN 939+ migrating S between 7-12am.

24.ix: Terns migrating S between 8-10.30am: ROSEATE TERN 1992+; WHITE-CHEEKED TERN 105+; BRIDLED TERN 1524+.

25.ix: PERSIAN SHEARWATER sub-species *persicus*, 1 c. 250m offshore.

Arpora Valley

27.x: CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE POB, N for last 7 years re-used & extended every season & birds showing every sign of br., behaviour; BLACKHEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE 1 M.

Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary 6-8.xi

CRESTED GOSHAWK 1; ORIENTAL SCOPS-OWL 3 hrd; BROWN FISH-OWL 1; BROWN WOOD-OWL 2 hrd; CEYLON FROGMOUTH 1 hrd; WHITE-RUMPED NEEDLETAIL-SWIFT 1+; BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER 1; GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER 1; BROWN-BREASTED FLYCATCHER 1; VERDITER FLYCATCHER 1; WHITE-BELLIED BLUE-FLYCATCHER 1 pair; WESTERN CROWNED WARBLER several; LITTLE SPIDERHUNTER 1.

Chapora Estuary

26.viii: GREAT KNOT 1 juv.

4.ix: GULL-BILLED TERN 8+ non-br., plm; CASPIAN TERN 6; LARGE CRESTED TERN 33 ad., non-br., plm., 20 1st summer plm; LESSER CRESTED TERN 63+ non-br., plm; SANDWICH TERN 7+ non-br., plm; ROSEATE TERN 9+ fading br., plm; COMMON TERN 4+ late br., plm; LITTLE TERN 12+ non-br., plm; WHITE-CHEEKED TERN 74 in full and fading br., plm.

11.ix: EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER 5 imm; BAR-TAILED GODWIT 6; RUDDY TURNSTONE 1; BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER 8.

22.ix: CRAB PLOVER 1; TEREK SANDPIPER 17.

23.x: HERRING GULL 3000+.

Divar

2.ix: RUFOUS-NECKED STINT 1 fading br., plm.

10.x: CASPIAN PLOVER 1 fading br., plm; RICHARD'S PIPIT 1.

24.x: BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER 34; EUROPEAN ROLLER 1.

Nagao-Saligao

19.x: STEPPE EAGLE 5+ imm; COMMON CUCKOO 2; BRAHMINY STARLING 1 juv.

Pilar Pond

10.x: COTTON TEAL CB, 4 downy chicks.

15.x: LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK CB, 7 fledglings.

Surla Ghat

15-16.ix: INDIAN RUFOUS BABBLER C; CRIMSON SUNBIRD 1 M.

SCUTH GOA DISTRICT (HL)**Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary**

2-4.x: BESRA SPARROWHAWK 1 M; PACIFIC SWIFT 5+.

HARYANA**GURGAON DISTRICT****Basai Wetland**

9.xii (BH; ND; Others): PAINTED STORK NT* 5; ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 15; BAR-HEADED GOOSE c. 350; WHITE-TAILED LAPWING 50+.

15.xii (BH; ND; Others): BLACK-NECKED STORK NT* 1 pair; BRAHMINY SHELDUCK 46; GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE VU* 1; RED-HEADED FALCON 1 pair; WHITE-TAILED LAPWING 50+; NORTHERN LAPWING 18; SAND MARTIN c. 50.

19.xii (BG; BH; KK): SARUS CRANE VU* 1 hrd.

Sultanpur National Park

8.xii (BH; SC; Others): GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE VU* 1 ad; SARUS CRANE VU* 1 pair.

HJAJJAR DISTRICT**Bhindawas Lake Bird Sanctuary**

8.xii (AS; HS; SCS; SM; SS): BLACK-NECKED STORK NT* 1; GREYLAG GOOSE c. 400; BAR-HEADED GOOSE c. 400; SARUS CRANE VU* 1 pair.

24.xii (HSS; MC; SCS; SM; T): BLACK-NECKED STORK NT* 1 pair; GREYLAG GOOSE c. 600; BAR-HEADED GOOSE c. 200; LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD 2 ad; EASTERN IMPERIAL EAGLE VU* 1 ad; GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE VU* 1; BRONZE-WINGED JACANA 1 ad (uncommon).

SONIPAT DISTRICT**Delhi Canal (Rohat-Harsana Minor stretch)**

22.xii (SM; SCS): GREAT CORMORANT c. 400 roosting on Eucalyptus trees; SARUS CRANE VU* 3+2+2+1 in wheat fields.

Drain Number Eight

17.xii (SM; SCS): SARUS CRANE VU* 20 scattered over ploughed fields; PAINTED STORK NT* 13+12+3 in flight; SHORT-TOED SNAKE-EAGLE 2 OH.

Gurgaon Canal (Kakroi-Jharoti stretch)2.xii (SCS): ASIAN OPENBILL-STORK 3; ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 12; BLACK IBIS 18+2+3+9; SARUS CRANE VU* 7+2+2; BLACK-HEADED MUNIA (Chestnut-bellied race, *Lonchura malacca rubroniger*) 2.

6.xii (SCS): SARUS CRANE VU* 2+3 (inc., 1 juv.); SIND SPARROW 6.

JLN Feeder Canal/Drain Number Eight (Rithal/Gohana)

13.xii (SCS): PLUMBEIOUS REDSTART 1 F; WHITE-CAPPED REDSTART 1 ad (first record for the Delhi region).

16.xii (SM; SCS): GREAT CORMORANT c. 500 roosting on Eucalyptus trees; PAINTED STORK NT* 16 OH; SPOTTED OWLET being mobbed & chased by 1 GREY-HEADED FLYCATCHER & 4 HUME'S WARBLERS; PLUMBEIOUS REDSTART; WHITE-CAPPED REDSTART.

23.xii (MC; SCS; T): BLACK-NECKED STORK NT* 1; BRAHMINY KITE 1+2 (uncommon); PLUMBEIOUS REDSTART; WHITE-CAPPED REDSTART.

25.xii (HSS; RS; SCS; SM): ORIENTAL WHITE IBIS NT* 26; COMB DUCK 28; BOOTED EAGLE 1 in dark phase; PLUMBEIOUS REDSTART; WHITE-CAPPED REDSTART.

Mohamedabad Marshes

15.xii (SM; SCS): PAINTED STORK NT* 15 OH; EURASIAN SPOONBILL 8; COMB DUCK 37; FERRUGINOUS POCHARD 20; RUFF 1000+.

23.xii (MC; SCS; T): SARUS CRANE VU* 2+1+4+2+2; SIND SPARROW 32 in Bbabul and tall grasses.

Rohat Pond

6.xii (SCS): PAINTED STORK NT* 5; ASIAN OPENBILL-STORK 9; SARUS CRANE VU* 2.

22.xii (SM; SCS): OSPREY 1.

TAMIL NADU**CHENNAI DISTRICT****Chennai 21.iv-16.v (VR)**

BLACK-WINGED STILT; BLACK-TAILED GODWIT 10; LITTLE STINT in br., plm; GULL-BILLED TERN 50+; GOLDEN ORIOLE.

DINDIGUL ANNA DISTRICT**Kodaikanal 3-10.v (VR)**

BOOTED EAGLE; INDIAN EDIBLE-NEST SWIFTLET; WHITE-RUMPED NEEDLETAIL-SWIFT; BROWN-BACKED NEEDLETAIL-SWIFT; ALPINE SWIFT; HOPOE; HOUSE SWALLOW; WHITE-BELLIED SHORTWING VU*; GREY-BREASTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH NT* C in undergrowth near sholas; BLACK-AND-ORANGE FLYCATCHER VU*; NILGIRI FLYCATCHER NT*.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; c-approximately; CB-confirmed breeding; CD*-conservation dependent; const-construction/ing; CR*-critical; DD*-data deficient; disp-display/ing; EN*-endangered; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; NT*-near threatened; OH-overhead; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Resp-respectively; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; VU*-vulnerable; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

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EDITORS' COMMENT: Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, though now split into *L. heuglini* & *L. cachinnans*, is taken as *argentatus* here.

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: Aasheesh Pittie; Delhi: Suresh Chand Sharma; Goa: Heinz Lainer; Haryana: Suresh Chand Sharma; Karnataka: J.N. Prasad; Kerala: P.O. Nameer; Maharashtra: Nitin Jamdar; Punjab: H.S. Sangha; Rajasthan: H.S. Sangha; Tamil Nadu: V. Santharam.

PIGEON POST**Demoiselle Cranes of Kheechan**

"The first presence of Demoiselle Cranes *Grus virgo* reported at Kheechan is of 94 birds in 1988 (Pitta # 127, November 2001, p. 2). I happen to have sighted them there in October/November 1983. My guesstimate was that they number into four digits. I had promptly informed the Bombay Natural History Society (Mr J.C. Daniel) and requested them to survey and evaluate this large congregation. But no one could be spared because of their pre-occupation with the preparations for their Centenary celebrations.